

LATTER-DAY SAINT CHURCH

ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANIZATION

In March, following the arrival of the pioneers, George A. Smith, one of the Authorities of the Latter-Day Saint Church and provisional leader of the Southern Colonies, en route from Parowan to Salt Lake City to attend the General Conference, camped with the little colony on the banks of the Beaver River, and proceeded to organize them into a branch of the Parowan Ward. Simeon F. Howd was made Presiding Elder of the Branch, with Edward W. Thompson as clerk.

During the summer following, their numbers were greatly augmented by the arrival of several groups of families from Parowan and Cedar City. By September, a full set of officers was installed, presumably by proclamation of the Governor of the Territory. During the year, the people planted their crops and had a bounteous harvest, but were not united under the leadership of their presiding officers. To overcome this undesirable situation, President Brigham Young took matters in hand and drafted Philo T. Farnsworth, then residing in Fillmore, to move to Beaver and become the Bishop of Beaver Ward. Elder Farnsworth reached Beaver the latter part of December, 1856, and was duly installed as Bishop with proper and fitting ceremony.

The year 1857 registered a community of one hundred souls, and in 1858 they erected a double log meeting house, large enough to seat 100 persons. In the center of "Plat A" was a block set apart as the Public Square, designated for Church purposes, and it was here the first little church stood, just west of where the Public Library now stands.

On November 5, 1859, further work of Church organization was advanced by organizing the High Priest

Quorum. The President selected for this organization was John Hughes, while Charles Wesley Wendall was selected for clerk.

JOHN R. MURDOCK CALLED TO BEAVER

Owing to factional differences, lack of unity, and the inability of the local authorities to carry on the Church work, the General Authorities decided to graft new blood into the community in the way of new leadership. John R. Murdock of Lehi was to become the new leader. Writing of this matter, the biography of Murdock says, "It gave me a severe shock when, upon invitation, I entered the office of President Young and was informed that he wanted me to be the Bishop of Beaver." This incident happened near the close of 1864. The winter of 1864-65, Murdock remained in Lehi and came to Beaver in May of the latter year. By the fall of that year, he had prepared to house his families at Beaver and they accordingly joined him.

His biography states further: "I bought a farm and some town lots and built houses for my families to live in. I also immediately set about building school houses, a meeting house and other public buildings. I was very zealous in this labor and carried much responsibility myself."

This statement well illustrates the progressive, onward-moving spirit of the new leader throughout his entire lifetime spent here. He was a builder, financier, a leader among men, a philosopher, a man of military bearing, ever found in the vanguard of civic and religious movements. Under such leadership, it is not surprising that the community should grow.

The buildings here referred to include the old Stake Tabernacle, the small brick building adjoining the Meredith Cafe on the south, which was the original Co-op store; the Central School house, and the old brick Tithing Office

building, which was used for Tithing and Quorum purposes.

With Murdock came also William Fotheringham, a man of considerable note, who had filled two missions, one to far-off India, the other to South Africa. The two missions covered a period of five years and that, too, without purse or script. He left his Utah home in Lehi en route for his first mission on foot, with a flour sack covering his food and clothing, and his face toward the Missouri River, one thousand miles distant. Elder Wm. Fotheringham came in a dual capacity, as private secretary for John R. Murdock, and second, as tithing clerk, or agent for Presiding Bishop Edward Hunter.

During the early settlement of Utah, it was customary for members of the Council of Twelve to be assigned posts in various localities to preside in a general way, and assist in establishing settlements and have general supervision in their respective districts. For example, Erastus Snow was located at St. George; George A. Smith at Parowan, and Amasa M. Lyman at Fillmore. The principal towns of Southern Utah were settled about as follows: Parowan and Cedar City in 1851, Ash Creek or Harmony, 1852; Beaver, 1856; Washington, 1857, and St. George, 1861. Men of prominence headed these colonies, especially in the case of St. George and Washington County, the main purpose being to strengthen these outposts, and second to develop the cotton industry. Erastus Snow, George A. Smith and Horace S. Eldridge were among this early number of settlers.

Among the prominent citizens of Beaver (1867) was Daniel Tyler, who had been president of the Swiss Mission prior to his residence in Beaver. A member of the Mormon Battalion in 1856-57, and later the author of a book entitled "The Mormon Battalion," he was a deep student, gifted in writing and teaching, and added greatly to the growth and stability of the community. For some time prior to this date, 1867, he had served as counselor to John Hughes in the presidency of the High Priest's

Quorum and was recognized as an authority in the doctrines and teachings of the dominant Church.

UNITED ORDER ATTEMPTED

In 1875, a territory-wide movement began with the General Authorities and was extended to every stake and ward of the Church. Its purpose, ostensibly, was to set the Church in order, preparatory to the establishment of the United Order, or law of consecration, of having all things in common among its membership. While the cause was a just one, ultimate results disclosed that the time was not opportune for the movement. In a few remote sections there was a measure of success attained. Perhaps it is safe to say that not more than ten per cent of the people conformed to the Order, and these on the average did not contribute more than ten per cent of their possessions. The contributions consisted largely of livestock, but little, if any, real property was tendered. What was known as the Co-op herd, consisting of the livestock of the Order, was under the direction of a board, which in turn placed the management with Isaac Riddle, who moved the horned stock and horses to the East Fork of the Sevier River. Sheep herds were under the management of M. L. Shepherd and C. D. White. The secretary of the company was Edward Tolton.

Through mismanagement, lack of attention and interest, the herds declined in numbers and values far below par. Many of the Saints who went into the Order were greatly disappointed in the venture, and for some it was a severe test of their faith and confidence in their leaders.

The reformation expanded beyond the United Order, for it included rebaptism and repentance of its membership. Every stake and ward in Zion (the stakes at that time numbered between 20 and 25), under the direction of the President of the Church, was reorganized and a general house-cleaning of officialdom followed. Immediately following the dedication of the St. George Temple, Jan-

school hours it is made available to the citizens who wish to do work there for themselves.

Perhaps no department of the school has done more for the town than has the Music department, with its excellent band and choruses, under such able directors as A. E. Johnson, Clair Johnson, Cannon Thompson, Milo Adams, Morris Cannegaitor and C. Harvey Rawlinson. Almost every student has had some musical training during his high school years.

MURDOCK ACADEMY

In 1898, through the influence and efforts of Prof. Benjamin Cluff, then the president of the Brigham Young Academy, and some of the citizens of Beaver, the L. D. S. Church decided to establish a school at the old Fort Cameron. When this military post was abandoned, the Church came into possession of one-half of the property and John R. Murdock and P. T. Farnsworth obtained the other half. These owners agreed to donate the property for a church school. It was made a branch of the Brigham Young Academy at Provo. The parent institution sent one of its faculty members down to be the principal. Beaver Stake was to renovate all the buildings, some for school purposes and others for living quarters, and to maintain the school for 10 years; after that time the Church would assume the whole cost of maintenance. The Stake presidency and high council were given the responsibility of raising the necessary funds. Each ward was apportioned a certain amount to contribute. Part of this could be paid in labor or produce.

PICTURESQUE SITE IN MOUTH OF CANYON

The site for this new school was in a very picturesque setting, in the foothills about a mile from the mouth of the Beaver Canyon. There was a ten-acre plot of ground planted to grass, which had been the soldiers' parade ground, with large cottonwood trees bordering the four

sides. A driveway went all around it. On the north were two buildings. The smaller one, which had been the soldiers' commissary, was made into a book store. To the east of this was a large, two-story structure with upper and lower verandas on all four sides, which had been a hospital. It was named the Murdock building and housed the offices and most of the classrooms. Of the two long buildings on the east, which had been barracks, the one on the northeast was used as an assembly hall for all occasions. The other was made into apartments for students. The barracks on the southwest of the campus was made into a gymnasium and dance hall. Along the street on the south was "Faculty Row," which had been the officers' quarters. This comprised five large, two-story buildings. Four of them were made to house two families each. Teachers' families occupied the lower floors and students lived upstairs. All the buildings were constructed of black volcanic rock which had been quarried from the mountain near by. To the south, just back of Faculty Row, was a large grove of cottonwood trees, with the Beaver River running through.

ACADEMY OPENED IN 1898

In this unique setting the Beaver Branch of the Brigham Young Academy began its short, but momentous, existence, on the 26th day of September, 1898. Prof. E. D. Partridge was sent from the school at Provo to be the principal. The first day, 38 students enrolled. C. Dennis White was the first to register. By the beginning of the second week 100 had entered. That first year only a two-year high school course was offered, along with a preparatory school giving seventh and eighth grade work. Students came from all the counties of Southern Utah. The majority of them entered the preparatory department.

The faculty that first year consisted of Prof. Partridge, who taught mathematics, chemistry and physics; Reinhard Maeser, English, literature and some preparatory